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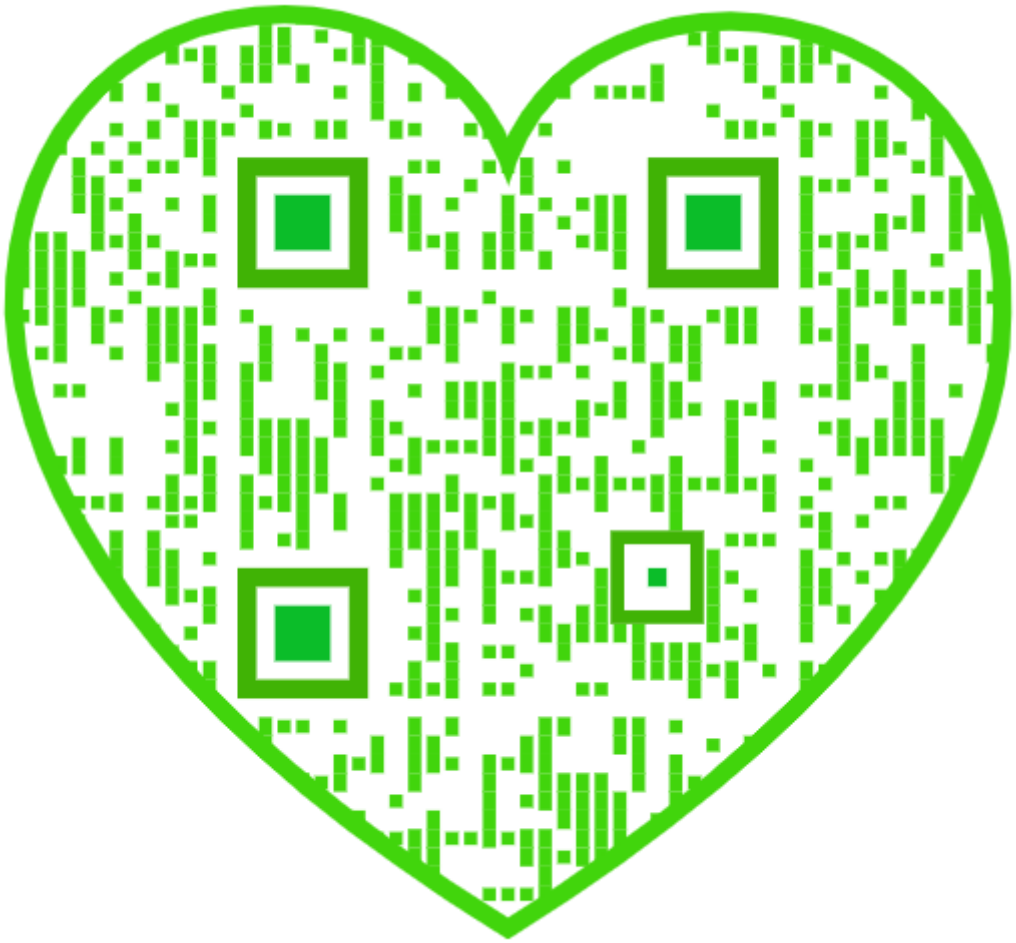
Christmas Night

A Poem



Christmas Night

A Poem

By Mrs. Amy E. Grigsby

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W.H.W., Jan. 6, 1933.

Christmas Night

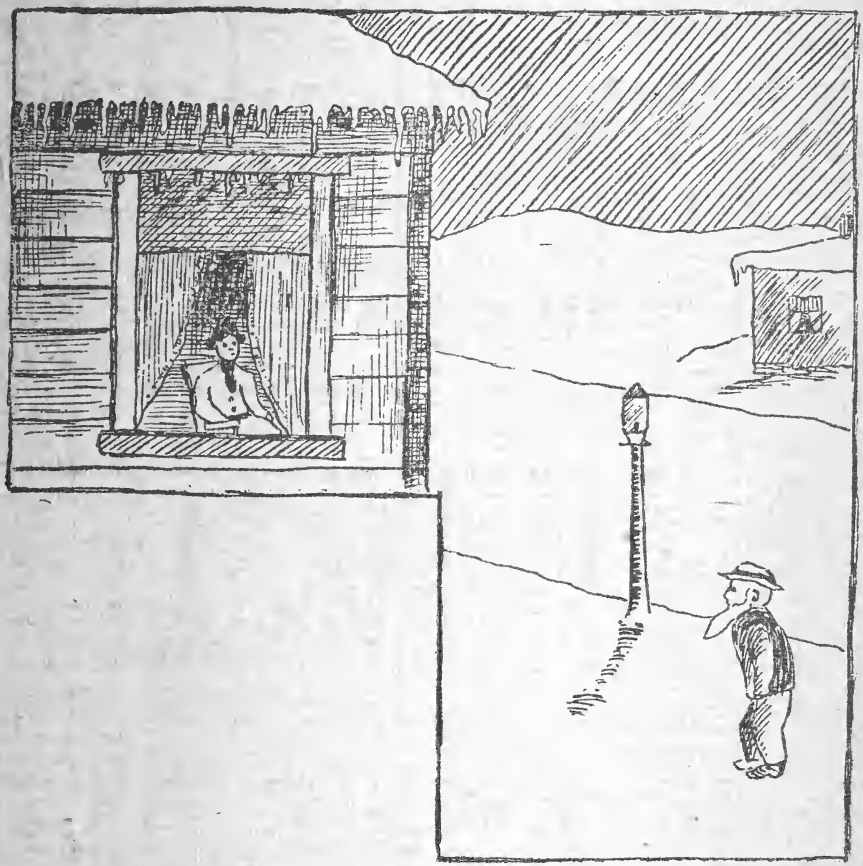
All day the snow had fallen,
And through the long, long night,
Until old Earth was covered
With a sparkling robe of white.

I sat at the window watching
The flakes as they silently fell,
Thanking Heaven for home and protection
And Him "Who does all things well."

And as I thus sat thinking,
I noticed a figure bent.
My heart went out in pity
To him, who was hither sent.

An aged man was approaching,
With locks of a silvery gray.
Presently I heard a knocking,
And a voice was heard to say:—

"May I come in, kind Madam,
To warm my fingers a bit?
The weather is turning colder
And the streets are poorly lit."



G.W.

The old man's face soon brightened,
And he sat in the great arm-chair,
But that look of intense sorrow
Was stamped on his features fair.

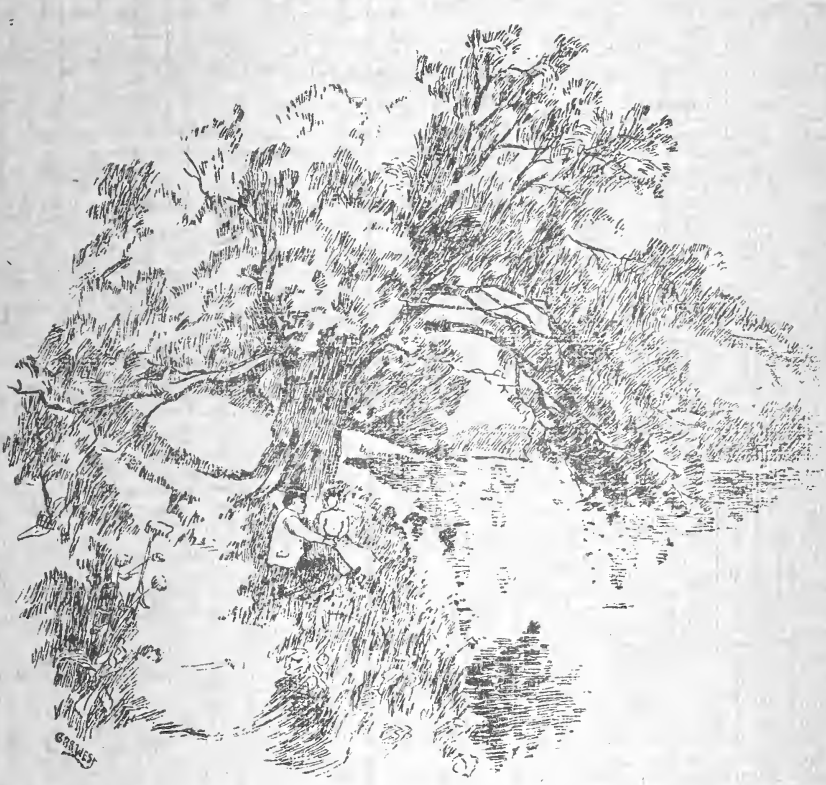
And as we sat, I wondered
How one so old and gray,
Should be so entirely forsaken,
On this, our Christmas day.

I guess he comprehended,
Tears came to the dimmed blue eyes,
And in a voice which trembled
Like clouds on Southern skies,

He told the sad, sad story
Of a life in prison spent,
Where forty years ago this night
He, a bright young man, was sent.

" Forty years ago to-night
I was to take a bride.
She was a fair, shy lady,
The belle and village pride.

To say she had lovers is useless,
For she could not fail to win,
A girl so shy and lovely,
A woman so queenly and prim.



The three most ardent suitors
Were John Clinton, tall and fair;
Albert, my own twin brother,
And I, the unlucky pair.

When I became successful,
The boys were greatly distressed;
But seemed to take it calmly,
Although they were depressed.

The Christmas night was nearing
When the wedding would take place;
But, Lo, Bert was found missing.
Of him we could find no trace.

After anxious days of searching
The body was finally found,
Bloody and bruised without mercy,
Buried deep into the ground.

'Twas plain it was a murder,
But who was the guilty one?
A tedious trial then followed
In which the others won.

Evidence pointed toward me,
For we had had angry words;
But, thank God, my soul is guiltless
As a lamb out on the swards.

They sent me away to prison,
To spend long weary years.
I left my mother and sweetheart
Both in a flood of tears.

Years fled and mother faded,
Until one day she passed
Peacefully from Earth to Heaven,
To find endless Joy at last.

John Clinton, upon his death-bed,
Just a fortnight ago,
Confessed to the awful murder
In sentences just so.

He said:—'I, through jealousy,
Was prompted to act that part.
I thought with him in prison
I'd win the girl of my heart.'

But, Ah, he failed completely,
For, heart-broken, she meekly died
Christmas night, cold and dreary;
To be patient hard she had tried.

Now, I have no friends," said the old man,
"No home wherein to dwell,
Then I'll go back to prison,
Back to my lonely cell.

G, —— W.

Yes, take me back to prison,
Where I ' ve spent long, lonely years, "
The feeble old voice quivered,
And freely flowed the tears.

The sobs grew louder and louder,
And lower sank the gray head,
Until it fell o ' er the chair arm,
For the poor old man was dead.

He need not go back to prison,
Or to his lonely cell.
He ' ll find his loved ones in Heaven,
And a home therein to dwell.

Mrs. Amy E. Grigsby

Elyria, Ohio

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